

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MBABAN 01032 300151Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-13 HA-05 EUR-12 VO-05 CA-01 L-03
INR-10 /060 W

-----032293 300210Z /62

R 291000Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4307
INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBABANE 1032

STADIS////////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, SHUM, WZ, MZ
SUBJECT: MOZAMBICAN REFUGEES DETAINED IN SWAZILAND

REF: STATE 77901

1. PREPARATORY TO MEETING WITH GOS ON SUBJECT OF
MOZAMBICANS DETAINED IN SWAZILAND (REFTEL), I MET
MARCH 28 WITH UNHCR REP SABITI. HE SAYS THAT UNHCR
ACCEPTS STATEMENT BY THE SEVEN THAT THEY WOULD FACE
DANGER IF RETURNED TO MOZAMBIQUE, AND THAT UNHCR
THEREFORE REGARDS THEM AS REFUGEES WITHIN ITS
MANDATE. IN RESPONSE TO MY REQUEST, SABITI
WILL INTERVIEW REFUGEES AGAIN WITH VIEW TO DETERMINING
WHETHER ANY HAVE US RELATIONS OR OTHER TIES RELEVANT
TO PAROLE. I MADE CLEAR TO SABITI THAT US CONSIDERS
ITSELF RECOURSE OF LAST RESORT.

2. SABITI SAID HE HAD ASKED PORTUGUESE CONSULATE GENERAL
IN MAPUTO TO INQUIRE OF LISBON WHETHER THESE REFUGEES
WERE PORTUGUESE CITIZENS AND, EVEN IF NOT,
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WHETHER PORTUGAL WOULD TAKE THEM IN. ACCORDING TO
SABITI, LISBON REPLIED THAT IT DID NOT RECOGNIZE
THEM AS CITIZENS; QUESTION OF PORTUGAL'S TAKING
THEM IN IS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION IN LISBON. HE
SUGGESTED IT MIGHT BE HELPFUL IN AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
WOULD LEAN ON CONSULATE GENERAL IN HOPE OF GETTING
FAVORABLE RESPONSE FROM LISBON.

3. SABITI WILL CONSIDER APPROACHING BRAZIL AS POSSIBLE RESETTLEMENT COUNTRY. FYI, HE RULED OUT BLACK AFRICAN COUNTRIES AS RESETTLEMENT POSSIBILITIES BECAUSE OF LANGUAGE PROBLEM AND BECAUSE SOME OF THE SEVEN REFUGEES HAVE RECORD OF PRE-INDEPENDENCE SERVICE IN PORTUGUESE ARMY (OF WHICH WE WERE UNAWARE), WHICH WOULD LIKELY BE VIEWED NEGATIVELY BY AFRICAN STATES SEEKING TO MAINTAIN OR IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH INDEPENDENT MOZAMBIQUE.

4. FACT THAT SEVERAL OF THESE REFUGEES HAVE PORTUGUESE ARMY EXPERIENCE PROBABLY PROVIDES RATIONALE FOR THEIR IMPRISONMENT BY GOS, WHICH UNDOUBTEDLY REGARDS GROUP AS SECURITY THREAT TO SWAZILAND AND/OR MOZAMBIQUE. SABITI PROMISED PROVIDE ME DETAILS OF THIS ARMY SERVICE AND ANY OTHER INFO THAT MIGHT BE USEFUL BACKGROUND FOR MY MEETING WITH GOS.
WACHOB

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEES, DETENTION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MBABAN01032
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780137-0371
Format: TEL
From: MBABANE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780314/aaaaaliy.tel
Line Count: 81
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: ae7d5ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: 78 STATE 77901
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3171222
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MOZAMBICAN REFUGEES DETAINED IN SWAZILAND
TAGS: SREF, SHUM, WZ, MZ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/ae7d5ebb-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014